

TOWN OF DAVIE
TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM/PHONE: Barbara McDaniel, MMC, Assistant Town Clerk/954-797-1023

PREPARED BY: Barbara McDaniel, MMC, Assistant Town Clerk/954-797-1023

SUBJECT: September 17, 2008 minutes

AFFECTED DISTRICT: n/a

ITEM REQUEST: **Schedule for Council Meeting**

TITLE OF AGENDA ITEM: September 17, 2008 (Workshop Meeting)

REPORT IN BRIEF: Council minutes from the September 17, 2008 Council meeting.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS: n/a

CONCURRENCES: n/a

FISCAL IMPACT: not applicable

Has request been budgeted? n/a

RECOMMENDATION(S): Motion to approve

Attachment(s): September 17, 2008 minutes

**TOWN OF DAVIE
SPECIAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at the meeting were Mayor Truex, Vice-Mayor Luis, and Councilmembers Caletka, Crowley and Starkey. Also present were Town Administrator Shimun, Town Attorney Rayson, and Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel recording the meeting.

Mayor Truex reported that he had met with Housing & Community Development Director Shirley Taylor-Prakelt, the Palma Nova Mobile Home Park property owner and his representatives and had visited the relocation office. Mayor Truex advised that he had requested a presentation from Town staff regarding the Town's permit process and a presentation from the Urban Group representatives regarding the relocation program.

Acting Development Services Director Marcie Nolan explained that staff had created a process to issue permits to relocate a mobile home within the Town within two days. She stated that these permits would be flagged and expedited by hand. Ms. Nolan said that if staff knew where most of the mobile homes were going, and the move utilized the same relocation contractor, staff could create a master permit process that would eliminate the need for individual permits.

Howard Steinholz, Managing Director of the Urban Group, explained that the relocation office was staffed with six relocation specialists who had already met with 366 tenant households in 17 working days. The office was open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every second Saturday of the month.

Mr. Steinholz expected every resident in the park would be relocated in accordance with State Statutes and the Town's ordinance. The first step was to perform a needs assessment, followed by a search for suitable replacement housing utilizing a housing registry comprising "real time" available housing. He said that several mobile home park owners had expressed a desire to relocate Palma Nova homeowners to their parks, and these owners had agreed to pay the relocation and establishment expenses for mobile homes moved to their parks.

Mr. Steinholz said that mobile home park owners' and movers' representatives had space in the relocation office to interview residents. The office staff also assisted residents in filling out the relocation forms and expedited sending these forms to Tallahassee. They also expedited payments from the park owner to mobile home owners who had surrendered mobile homes with titles.

Councilmember Starkey asked if it would be possible to relocate everyone from the park within a six-month timeframe. Mr. Steinholz said that they would try to accomplish this. Councilmember Starkey asked what would happen if they could not meet the deadline. Mr. Steinholz said that he could not speak for the park owner. Councilmember Starkey asked what would happen to owners of mobile homes that were built before 1981 that could not be moved. Mr. Steinholz explained that when there was

an involuntary closing of a mobile home park, the wind zone category requirements were lifted, and if another mobile home park owner was willing to accept these mobile homes, they could be moved. He said that they had already pre-qualified some mobile homes built prior to 1972 to be moved. Councilmember Starkey asked if the park owner purchased insurance for the mobile home being moved. Mr. Steinholtz said that the mobile home mover took this responsibility.

Councilmember Starkey asked if the Palma Nova park owner would compensate mobile home owners who had recently purchased their units if they could not be moved. Mr. Steinholtz explained that where there were mortgages, they would work with a lender "to try to deal with that." He said that in the past, some lenders had been "pretty reasonable" about forgiving a certain amount of the loans.

Mr. Steinholtz assured Councilmember Starkey that security deposits were returned to residents when they left. Councilmember Starkey asked if the mobile park owner also held title to any of the mobile homes with mortgages. Mr. Steinholtz could not answer this question.

Mr. Steinholtz stated that the Urban Group had been hired when they were informed the park was closing. They had begun research to create a relocation plan when they were given a copy of the Town's ordinance, but Mr. Steinholtz said that he was not working with Palma Nova at that time. He could not cite the exact dates they had created the relocation plan or were hired by Palma Nova.

Councilmember Caletka asked if a resident's criminal background would be taken into consideration during the relocation. Mr. Steinholtz said that this would depend on what was said during the interview. These questions would be asked by the park to which a resident wanted to relocate.

Councilmember Caletka asked what further efforts would be made to contact owners. Mr. Steinholtz said that they planned to send notices and a newsletter to residents. Mr. Steinholtz described the interview process and said that the questionnaire completed by residents included a question regarding pets. Audience members advised that they were not given a relocation questionnaire.

Ms. Hernandez said that she had visited the office the second day it was open to apply, but still no one had ever called her. Lori Ross said that she had discussed her \$5,000 mortgage with staff in the relocation office and had been informed they could not help her.

Councilmember Caletka asked what would be done for residents who were on a fixed income and did not meet the income requirements of a prospective mobile home park. Mr. Steinholtz said that, "we will try to find someplace" and advise that they had created a subsidized housing list. He advised that he had met with Housing and Community Development regarding available assistance for residents and had also contacted nonprofit organizations to which they would refer residents. Councilmember Caletka asked about families having students with special needs. Mr. Steinholtz said that they could put such a resident in touch with special education resources.

Mr. Steinholtz admitted to Vice-Mayor Luis that relocating all of these residents was a daunting task. The fact that nearby mobile home parks were interested in taking the residents and paying for their relocation costs was very helpful. The Town's plan to expedite the relocation permits was also helpful. Mr. Steinholtz anticipated being able to relocate 80% of the residents within six months.

Councilmember Crowley remarked that the relocation office was open during regular working hours and suggested additional Saturday hours. He also recommended sending representatives into the park to knock on doors. Mr. Steinholz said that appointment times were booked solid through the end of the month and agreed to add Saturday hours. He also offered to visit homebound residents.

Councilmember Crowley asked Mr. Steinholz if this relocation program met or exceeded state and local requirements. Mr. Steinholz felt they were exceeding them.

Mayor Truex believed that by the end of February, most Palma Nova residents would be relocated. He wanted the Town to offer Palma Nova residents every assistance in their relocation.

Mayor Truex had met with Mr. Foreman and said that he had learned that mortgage holders were entitled to the same incentive package from the property owner and assistance from the State, even though they did not have a physical title. No one could guarantee that a resident would be relieved of a mortgage.

Mr. Rayson explained that in order for a mobile home owner to receive the abandonment payment, s/he must own the mobile home free and clear of all liens, but an owner with a mortgage may qualify for \$3,000 from the relocation trust fund to relocate. A park resident explained that she owned a 1971 mobile home that could not be moved and she had a mortgage. She had been informed she was not eligible for either type of assistance.

Mayor Truex had learned that 200 to 300 of the mobile homes could be moved and explained that the moving costs should be covered by the state-sponsored assistance program and the incentives offered by park owners. He acknowledged that temporary lodging and storage for personal belongings while the mobile home was being moved would not be covered.

Mayor Truex advised that he had visited the relocation office and remarked that there was a tremendous amount of information available from moving companies and mobile home parks in Davie actively recruiting new residents. Information was also available on social services for the elderly and families.

Mayor Truex said that he had emphasized the importance of the school year during his visit with Mr. Forman. Mr. Forman had agreed to meet with Mayor Truex, Mr. Shimun and school principals to discuss the timing of the FCAT's. Mr. Forman had not agreed to any rent abatement, except that offered to residents who were moving their mobile homes. Mayor Truex explained that those who were relocating their mobile homes would have most of their costs covered by incentives from the new mobile home park or the mover, so waving the cost of permits would not benefit the residents.

Mayor Truex suggested that the Town could help with moving expenses and other transition costs, and this assistance should be based on need. Mayor Truex hoped they could develop a matching fund program with the Palma Nova park owner. He asked Mr. Shimun to identify a source of funds, and develop criteria for recipients to receive the funds. Mayor Truex listed other possible suggestions: meet with lenders and reconvene the Mobile Home Task Force.

Vice-Mayor Luis suggested asking the park owner to match the permit fee.

Councilmember Caletka favored reconvening the Mobile Home Task Force and suggested charging them with developing criteria that would be used to qualify residents

for Town assistance. He suggested the Community Endowment funds could be used to assist the residents.

Councilmember Crowley agreed they should reconvene the Mobile Home Task Force. He also agreed the Town should assist residents, but wanted to ensure that only the residents would benefit from the Town's aid, not the developer or the park owner. Councilmember Crowley suggested using the \$50,000 the Town had set aside for legal fees to fight the airport expansion to help relocating mobile park residents instead.

Councilmember Starkey supported reconvening the Mobile Home Task Force. She agreed with the suggestion to help residents pay for moving fees, but wanted to be sure only the residents benefited.

Debra Lewis advised that she had sent an email to Council regarding land banking, with four different options related to income. Councilmember Starkey agreed to provide this information to the Mobile Home Task Force.

Janet Riley, Legal Aid of Broward County, supported reconvening the Mobile Home Task Force. She had learned from the Broward County School Board that once a child permanently moved, s/he must attend school in his new jurisdiction. Ms. Riley had learned that 260 students from Palma Nova Mobile Home Park attended Davie Elementary. She also suggested that the Urban Group be charged with finding affordable, sustainable housing so that displaced residents were not forced to move six months after they relocated because they could not continue to afford a rent payment much higher than they were accustomed to paying.

There being no further business to discuss and no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Approved_____

Town Clerk

Mayor/Councilmember